

Approved For Release 2008/07/28 : CIA-RDP85B01152R000600710001-5

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 21, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

The Federal government is the Nation's largest single builder, printer, and user of design services: what we build, print, or cause to be manufactured for Federal use directly affects every citizen. We must ensure that these vast investments are costeffective, well-planned, and reflect the standards of excellence which we all expect from our government.

More than a decade has passed since the late Nancy Hanks, then Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, was asked by the White House to coordinate the efforts of Executive agencies in improving the quality of design in the Federal government. The outstanding achievements over the years of the Endowment's Federal Design Improvement Program have allowed us to make considerable progress in the pursuit of design excellence. We must continue in this direction in an age when we seek to accomplish more with less.

I am pleased to announce my Administration's continued support for the goals of the Federal Design Improvement Program. To further this effort I am establishing a quadrennial Presidential Design Awards Program. This award will publicly recognize successful achievements in Federal design and inspire standards of excellence throughout the government.

I have asked Frank Hodsoll, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, to implement this initiative. I know he will enjoy your full support. Please designate an individual with an appropriate background and position to be your liaison with the Endowment to help ensure the success of this program.

I urge all agencies to consider it their obligation to the American people to set a good example and do everything in their power to ensure the highest obtainable quality in Federal design activities.

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